

Appendix table 7-29

Public perceptions of various groups' understanding of public issues: 2006 and 2010

(Percent and mean score)

Public issue/group	2006							2010						
	Degree of understanding (on scale of 1 to 5)						Mean score	Degree of understanding (on scale of 1 to 5)						Mean score
	Very well				Not at all	Don't know		Very well				Not at all	Don't know	
	5	4	3	2	1			5	4	3	2	1		
Nuclear power: understand the likely effects of using nuclear power to generate electricity														
Nuclear engineers	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	58	18	11	4	3	5	4.3
Elected officials	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	5	11	32	33	15	5	2.6
Business leaders	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	5	11	32	30	17	5	2.5
Stem cell research: understand stem cell research														
Medical researchers	50	24	15	3	3	6	4.2	49	26	14	3	2	5	4.2
Elected officials	3	7	35	26	22	6	2.4	4	7	34	28	24	5	2.4
Religious leaders	6	8	26	29	25	6	2.4	5	6	27	28	29	5	2.3
Global warming: understand the causes of global warming														
Environmental scientists	44	22	22	4	4	4	4.0	40	20	21	10	6	4	3.8
Elected officials	5	7	31	29	24	4	2.4	5	10	28	26	26	4	2.4
Business leaders	4	8	30	32	22	4	2.4	4	9	29	28	26	4	2.3
Genetically modified foods: understand the risks posed by genetically modified foods														
Medical researchers	32	32	18	8	5	6	3.8	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Elected officials	3	6	24	33	29	5	2.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Business leaders	4	7	24	31	28	6	2.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Federal income taxes: understand the likely effects of reducing federal income taxes														
Economists	33	19	29	7	7	5	3.7	27	21	31	8	6	7	3.6
Elected officials	10	18	34	19	15	5	2.9	10	18	32	18	17	6	2.8
Business leaders	15	29	33	12	6	4	3.4	16	24	31	14	9	7	3.3

NA = not available, question not asked

NOTES: Responses to *How well do the following groups understand: causes of global warming; stem cell research; effects of reducing federal income taxes; likely effects of using nuclear power to generate electricity; risks posed by genetically modified foods?* Mean understanding score based on 5-point scale, where 5 = understands very well and 1 = understands not at all. In 2006, questions on stem cell research and global warming asked of 928 survey respondents; questions on genetically modified foods and federal income taxes asked of 936 respondents. In 2010, questions on stem cell research and global warming asked of 961 survey respondents; questions on nuclear power and federal income taxes asked of 971 respondents. Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.

SOURCE: University of Chicago, National Opinion Research Center, General Social Survey (2006, 2010).

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